

# EMU, donors unveil Windgate Arts Complex

**Madison Cantrell**  
*Arts Editor*  
*Cellar Roots Editor-in-Chief*

On Sept. 12, Eastern Michigan University hosted a dedication ceremony in the new Christopher Kaufman Critique Atrium to celebrate the \$3.4 million gift from the Windgate Foundation that broke ground in creating the new and improved 3D arts complex on campus.

The event featured a ribbon-cutting ceremony, student-guided tours of the new facilities, and honored all of the big and small donations that made the Windgate Arts Complex possible.

The Windgate Arts Complex, spanning 23,000 sq. ft., is now home to EMU’s 3D art programs including ceramics, digital fabrication, furniture, and sculpture.

Art students will now have the opportunity to work, create, and innovate in a space that encourages



**Sandra Murchison, Director of EMU's School of Art & Design, speaks at the Windgate Arts Complex dedication ceremony in the new Christopher Kaufman Critique Atrium on September 12.** Madison Cantrell / *The Eastern Echo*

cross-disiplinary exploration.

Throughout the Windgate Arts Complex are ten student-designed and made benches. EMU student Leah Popyk’s bench design won the GameAbove Student Furniture Design Challenge in winter 2024. EMU furniture design professor John DeHoog led Popyk and her classmates in transforming Popyk’s bench design into a reality.

The Windgate Arts Complex will supply art students with the resources needed to gain real life experiences in the art world.

# Refugee students pursue education via sponsorship

*In collaboration with Welcome Corps on Campus, Eastern Michigan is among the first colleges in the nation to sponsor refugee students to finish their education and earn U.S. citizenship.*

**Olivia Hendry**  
*News Reporter*

Eastern Michigan University is one of the first colleges in the nation to participate in Welcome Corps on Campus, a program that allows refugee students to continue their higher education in the United States. Through grants and private donations, three students who are originally from Somalia, Syria and the Democratic Republic of Congo will be able to finish their degrees, fully funded, for the next four years.

The Welcome Corps is an initiative founded under the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program, which seeks to bring refugees to the United States and partner them with sponsors to help them transition to life in the U.S. Though this program has existed for only a year and a half, it has already facilitated the sponsorship of 7,000 refugees across the country, with 15,000 sponsors applying to help refugees with the resettlement process. Now the Welcome Corps’ new program Welcome Corps on Campus seeks to bring displaced college students to leading academic institutions in the U.S.

“It just makes me very proud to be part of this university. It makes me extremely grateful to work with colleagues who have such a welcoming spirit and to be able to be part of such a groundbreaking program,” said

Lauren London, the General Counsel at EMU. As the university’s primary legal counsel and advisor, London has helped facilitate EMU’s involvement in the program. Now she works closely with the refugee students.

“It is an extremely rewarding experience for me to be part of [this] process. It’s a huge responsibility, but it’s extremely joyful,” said London.

Acceptance into Welcome Corps on Campus requires a lengthy application process for both the university hoping to participate and the refugee students. In this case, the Welcome Corps wanted to ensure that EMU had proper funding for the program, academic accreditation, and mentorship, as well as language support and social plans. Welcome Corps on Campus also wanted to make sure that the refugee students had health insurance and a medical screening scheduled upon arrival. EMU’s commitment to supporting international students has seen it through that application process.

University president James Smith credits the success of Welcome Corps on Campus to the university’s past of supporting international students. “We traditionally have someplace between 70 and 85 different countries represented on campus,” he said. “So we have a long history of facilitating

students coming to campus, being oriented to life in the United States, being oriented to class.”

Even after EMU was chosen for the program and matched with the refugee students, the university went through its own independent application process, making sure that each student matched would be a good fit for the school. The baseline requirements for the refugees were that they must be between 18 and 24 years of age, have proficiency in English, and meet the program’s academic requirements.

With three refugee students, EMU has one of the biggest cohorts among participating colleges. These refugees, who will remain anonymous, come from two different refugee camps. Two come from a camp in Kenya, while the other comes from a camp in Jordan. They have also gone through their own rigorous application process to be chosen for this program and are now beginning their first year at EMU.

This larger cohort size was by design. According to London, since there are three students, each student will have people in their same situation to talk to and lean on as they begin their

journey at EMU. They can rest assured that they are not alone.

“We have always felt it’s important to have a program of at least that size so that we can create that social culture for them,” said London.

Another way London and Smith have helped the new students find support is having them meet with other international students. They brought the students to the International Student Picnic earlier this school year, hosted by the Office for International Students and Scholars. While it was not mandatory for them to go, Smith said, it was important that they engaged in these types of social events and met students of similar ethnic backgrounds.

“We invited them so they can meet other international students,” said Smith. “We wanted to bring them into the fold and have them meet people, and know who other students are from around the globe.”

Both Smith and London acknowledge the tremendous change these students are going through, coming to a new country, leaving their families behind, and quickly being immersed in an entirely different culture. As they are learning about living and studying in America, London gets to meet with them several times a week. And, she

said, the learning isn’t one sided.

“They have taught me about their favorite foods from back home, about their families and their process for applying to the Welcome Corps program. I’m learning about the U.S. immigration process, and how heartbreaking and frustrating it can be for immigrants,” said London. “I am learning about what it means never to have set foot in the United States before, and all of the small cultural things that require explanation, that we might not have thought to explain before.”

Smith hopes that this first cohort is just one of many for the EMU. However, whether or not the university can support another cohort will depend on funding. The university is exploring different long-term avenues to secure funding with the goal becoming a corporate sponsor.

“We want to be able to give them the very best experience, but to do that, we have to have the largesse of others. We’ll continue to work with our friends in the foundation to go out and raise money so that we can bring other students,” said Smith.

As EMU continues to navigate this new program and the refugee students navigate their first year on campus, both the university and the students will encounter triumphs and challenges. EMU hopes to deliver on its “All are welcome here” message with continuous support to these new students.

*"I am learning about what it means never to have set foot in the United States before ..." Lauren London said.*

# The Eastern Echo

The Eastern Echo serves the Eastern Michigan University and Ypsilanti-area communities as an independent student-operated newspaper. Founded in 1881 as The Normal News, The Echo distributes weekly printed editions on campus and throughout the surrounding community during the fall and winter academic semesters; and publishes year-round on the web. Contents are subject to copyright and may not be reproduced without prior written consent of the newspaper.

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## THE ECHO MISSION

The Eastern Echo informs the Eastern Michigan University and Ypsilanti community by highlighting newsworthy content in a fair, accurate and timely manner.

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## PICK UP A COPY









Print editions published Tuesdays from late August to early May are available in racks or on tables in all academic buildings on the EMU campus, and at dozens of businesses in the community.

- Among those businesses are:
- Savvy Sliders on Washtenaw Ave.
  - Basil Babes on Cross St.
  - Sweetwaters on Cross St.
  - Lucky Garden on N. Huron River
  - HK China One on W. Cross St.
  - Gora's Grill on W. Cross St.
  - Tatted Up on Perrin St.

## CORRECTIONS

The Eastern Echo corrects mistakes. If we got it wrong, we want to make it right. Errors should be brought to the attention of the editor in chief by email: editor@easternecho.com.

# Weekly Calendar

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17	WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 18	THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 19	FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 20	SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 21	SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 22
EMU 175TH BIRTHDAY BASH STUDENT CENTER - LOWER LEVEL DINING ROOM 2 - 5 P.M. 	NARCAN OVERDOSE PREVENTION - LAYMAN TRAINING HALLE LIBRARY ROOM 300 8:30 - 9:30 A.M. 	STUDY ABROAD FAIR STUDENT CENTER EATERIES 10 A.M. - 2 P.M.  SATURN: JEWEL OF THE HEAVENS AT THE EMU PLANETARIUM MARK JEFFERSON SCIENCE COMPLEX 402 7:30 - 8:30 P.M. 	BEYOND CHOIR CONCERT- EARTH & ALL STARS HONORS COLLEGE AUDITORIUM 7:30 - 9:30 P.M.  MOVIE IN THE PARK: PROBLEMISTA UNIVERSITY PARK AMPHITHEATRE 8 - 10 P.M. 	EMU FOOTBALL VS. SAINT FRANCIS UNIVERSITY RYNEARSON STADIUM 2 P.M. 	FOR FAMILIES: DANCE PARTY FOR KIDS WITH HOUSE OF JIT AT THE FREIGHTHOUSE YPSILANTI FREIGHTHOUSE 11 A.M. 

# Scoop's Forecast

80°  59° Tuesday, Sept. 17

79°  60° Wednesday, Sept. 18

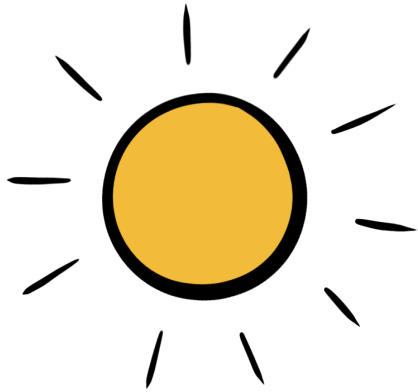
77°  56° Thursday, Sept. 19

78°  57° Friday, Sept. 20

79°  57° Saturday, Sept. 21

76°  53° Sunday, Sept. 22

75°  52° Monday, Sept. 23



# Professor Sadaf Ali earns spot on Nov. ballot in Ypsilanti Township

*Hunter Johnstone  
News Reporter*

Eastern Michigan University professor Sadaf Ali has joined the Nov. 5 general election as a write-in candidate for Ypsilanti Township Park Commission member.

Ali, a professor of electronic media and film studies, previously ran for

Ypsilanti Township Board of Trustees Member in the primary election that took place back in August. There, she almost unseated incumbent, John P. Newman, but there were only four seats available.

“We need to have some of our own people representing our community in these particular spaces. Local politics is extremely important, and we don’t ever have enough of our own people in

these spaces,” Ali said.

Ali had always thought about running for office, but the thing that pushed her was attending the Ypsilanti City Council decision on their ceasefire resolution.

“It was the Palestinian genocide, the genocide in Gaza, and now moving into the West Bank. That was really the impetus for me to go, okay, I’m gonna go ahead and run,” Ali said.

One of Ali’s main goals is to turn empty spaces and subdivisions such as Sugar Brook and West Willow into actual parks, and to bring in programs for children and nature.

“You can make a real difference in your community, and you really should run for office. I always tell my students if you even have the slightest inclination that you’re interested in it, just do it,” Ali said.

# What's the move? Sept. 16-22

*Hunter Johnstone  
News Reporter*

Check out these events happening on and around Eastern Michigan University’s campus this week.

## Volleyball vs Michigan State — Sept. 16

See Eastern Michigan Volleyball take on Michigan State. The first 100 watchers will get a limited edition t-shirt and there will also be a pre-match block party. The event will be held in the George Gervin Gameabove Center from 6 p.m. to 12 a.m.

## EMU 175th Birthday Bash — Sept. 17

Stop by the Student Center - Lower Level Dining Room for sweet treats and fun to celebrate EMU’s birthday. The event will run from 2 to 5 p.m.

## Ethics Bowl information meeting — Sept. 18

Interested in ethics? Consider looking into the Ethics Bowl. The meeting will be held in Pray Harrold 702 G from 5 to 6 p.m.

## Study Abroad Fair — Sept. 19

Learn more about the Study Abroad program by meeting with faculty. The event is free to attend and LBC-approved. It will be in the Eateries section of the Student Center from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

## Saturn: Jewel of the Heavens at the EMU Planetarium — Sept. 19

Explore Saturn, its rings, and many of its moons. This event is \$5 and open to the public as well. The event is in the Mark Jefferson Science Complex 402 from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. Get your tickets here.

## Beyond Choir Concert: Earth & All Stars — Sept. 20

EMU Choirs will host Beyond, a new professional choral ensemble based in Ypsilanti, to perform in the Honors College. The event is free with an EMU ID and will be in the Honors College Auditorium from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m.

## Movie in the Park: Problemista — Sept. 20

Catch the first movie in the park with “Problemista.” It will play at the University Park Amphitheatre from 8 to 10 p.m.

## House of Jit at the Freighthouse — Sept. 21

See Detroit Jit in Rhythm of the Feet, an evening-length dance piece written by House of Jit founder Michael Manson at the Ypsilanti Freighthouse. The event is free and begins at 7:30 p.m.

## For Families: Dance Party for Kids with House of Jit at the Freighthouse — Sept. 22

Join House of Jit founder Michael Manson and friends perform and also interact with audience members after the show. The performance is free and begins at 11 a.m.

# Journalists talk civil discourse for Constitution Week at EMU

*Gray Connor  
Staff Writer*

Instability across the American political scene — and increasing tension among political parties as the November election nears — has been on full display, prompting public concern over a decreasing ability for opposing sides to engage in civil discourse.

A 2023 study conducted by the Pew Research Center indicates that 65% of Americans feel exhausted by politics.

"Positive views of many governmental and political institutions are at historic lows, a growing share of the public dislikes both political parties, and just 4% of U.S. adults say the political system is working well," researchers said in that study report. Americans are asking: How can people navigate a hostile political environment, while still using their voice?

Nolan Finley and Stephen Henderson, both longtime Southeast Michigan journalists and political commentators, often find themselves in the middle of that instability — writing about issues, ideas and viewpoints that are vastly different. Neither, however, believes those differences mean they can't be friends. Both say those civil conversations can and should occur in all communities, which is one reason they launched the Great Lakes Civility Project in 2020. The project's goal: "Build healthy disagreement and constructive dialogue while teaching

people how to build civility in their relationships."

On Thursday, Sept. 19, Finley, an editorial writer and editor at the Detroit News, and Henderson, an editor at Bridge Detroit, bring a version of their civility work to Eastern Michigan University, as part of a campus celebration of Constitution Day.

During an afternoon presentation in the Student Center Auditorium, Finley and Henderson will discuss the significance of civil discussion and the importance of listening to different perspectives. The event starts at 3:30 p.m. Thursday and is approved for learning beyond the classroom credits for students who attend.

"It never occurred to us that we couldn't be friends because we disagree," Nolan said in a comment posted on the Civility Project website. "We've never avoided conversation, we never pulled punches, we sort of enjoyed the mix-up."

Henderson, who won a Pulitzer Prize for his commentary work as editorial page editor at the Detroit Free Press, said civil discourse is necessary.

"If we reach the point where we dehumanize the people we disagree with, anything is possible," Henderson said on the website. "We must step back and learn to talk to people as people, rather than political adversaries."

Henderson's work on the Detroit financial crisis earned him the 2014 Pulitzer Prize for commentary, currently works for Bridge Detroit.

"One party in this nation, the Republican Party, has been gesturing toward and coddling this brand of traitorous, racist and violent political expression, for several decades," Henderson said in an opinion article published Jan. 7, 2021, following the Jan. 6 insurrection in Washington D.C. "The responsibility, as much as it lies with the limited intellects who stormed the Capitol yesterday, sits in the lap of modern conservatism."

Finley, whose career spans more than 48 years, criticized the Democratic Party's handling of the Hunter Biden trial in a commentary published earlier this year. The work was titled "Nolan Out Loud: Zuckerberg Exposes Democratic Threat to Democracy."

"The absurdity of Democratic claims to be defenders of democracy was laid bare by the letter Meta founder and Chairman Mark Zuckerberg wrote to Congress detailing the Biden/Harris administration's efforts to shut down COVID-19 policy dissent and bury the Hunter Biden laptop scandal," Finley wrote in the commentary.

While the presenters have opposing opinions on a political level, the goal of their collaboration in the Civility Project, and their presentation at Eastern aims to prove that engagements from across the aisle can happen civilly. As stated in their promotional material for the EMU event: "The conversation promises to be insightful and thought-provoking, highlighting the value of civil discourse and understanding

diverse viewpoints."

Constitution Day is Tuesday, but through the end of September, the Upshur Institute of Civic Education at Eastern will host a number of events relating to the Constitution and navigating modern political discourse.

## Celebrate Constitution Day

On Tuesday, to explore strategies for approaching political conversations, presenters John Snoad and Scott Alford, managers at Sphere Education Initiatives, will offer tips for students to enter such exchanges, while keeping in mind the value of diverse viewpoints and active listening.

The event is at the Halle Library from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. followed by a workshop from 12:40 to 3:30 p.m.

## Teaching in Turbulent Times

Designed for instructional staff at the university, Teaching in Turbulent Times offers a program for navigating the 2024 election in the classroom. The event will include tips and strategies to help reduce the stress that local, national and worldwide events can create.

This event will be held Sep. 27 at the Halle Library from noon to 3 p.m. with lunch provided.

For more information on any of the Upshur Institute of Civic Education's events, contact director Brigid Beaubian via email at bbeaubi1@emich.edu or call the Department of History and Philosophy office at 734-487-1018.

# YpsiReal, EMU give free gift cards

*Lauren Holloway  
News Reporter*

This year marks the third annual partnering between the Explore Ypsi gift card program and Eastern Michigan University. The event is all about getting university students to explore Ypsilanti and everything it has to offer.

Until the end of the semester students and faculty can go to Boone Hall, Room 203, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. There are 2,000 \$10 gift cards. It’s all first come first serve, only one per person.

The gift cards go towards 25 different businesses in the Ypsilanti area, including the Ypsilanti Farmers Market for the first time this year.

However, it’s not just restaurants and dining on the list, it’s also hair care and hardware stores.

A limited amount of gift cards will also be available at Swoop’s Pantry. They will be given out at various events on campus throughout the semester.

The goal of this partnership is to help those who get the gift cards, but also to support the community. With stores

opening, closing, and moving so often it’s important for the students to know what’s right in their backyard. With the university being such a big part of the community, it’s vital that the two stay connected. This partnership is a great way to strengthen that relationship. The students get a little extra money on the side and the businesses get more foot traffic.

# Midnight pancakes at The Chapel at EMU serve up a safe place to socialize

*Isabella DiPonio  
Staff Writer*

As chaplain for the Eastern Michigan University police department, the Rev. Bryan Schindel would often ride along with the patrolmen at night.

So, he witnessed some of the crime occurring in the community, and he said, he was always thinking about the students and ways to lower crime rates.

“How can we keep students out of trouble?,” he said he asked himself more than once.

A little more than a decade ago, he found an answer he liked: free pancakes and waffles.

Friday Night Pancakes was launched at Cross & Resurrection, The Chapel at EMU, at 812 Ann St. on campus, with a goal of giving students a safe place

to socialize, grab a late-night meal and have a little fun. Free pancakes and waffles are available from 10 p.m. to 1 a.m. each Friday. All students are welcome.

Schindel, the senior pastor at the church, said he is very thankful to be able to provide the space and food for students. He said the project works because of volunteers and donations, some of which come from EMU alumni, and some from other area churches.

“It’s not a government program, this is people who actually care about the students,” Schindel said. “It is because of the people that give to the church.”

Schindel has been a part of The Chapel for 15 years. In addition to serving as chaplain to the EMU police department, he is a member of Love Washtenaw and the Rotary Club of

Ann Arbor North. When Schindel first started riding with the police patrols, he said, crime rates were high.

He said Eastern was hosting a double feature in the Student Center on Friday nights, but he wanted to find something else for students to do.

Now, Friday Night Pancakes serves more than just EMU students, Schindel said. Students from Washtenaw Community College, the University of Michigan, and even people from the Ypsilanti community arrive for the late-night pancakes.

“We don’t turn anyone down,” Schindel said. He loves that he is able to provide students with food and safe space.

“It warms my heart because it is needed,” Schindel said.

Every week students come together and connect over pancakes. Pastor

Bryan said they usually get up to 300 students every Friday. Sometimes there are even lines to the back of the building.

Senior at EMU, Erin Joyce, has been coming since they were a sophomore. They said the community is what brings them back each week.

“A lot of times people don’t really see their friends after classes,” Joyce said. “It is a good place to catch up or meet new people.”

Students also are able to volunteer to help serve pancakes each Friday. Organizers said the event provides a great opportunity for students to receive community service hours. “We’re usually booked out a couple months in advance,” one organizer said.

Those interested in getting involved, should email: pancakes@crissabdr.es.org.

*Read more on  
our website!*



# Putt-R-Round Mini Golf & Putt Arcade delivers fresh, fun ideas to Ypsilanti

*Quanzelle Wyatt*  
*News Reporter*

Ypsilanti has a mini golf course in the form of Putterz, but it can be a little bit of a ways to go for a college student, but there’s one mini golf course and arcade that is a lot closer to campus.

Located in downtown Ypsilanti on W. Michigan Ave., Putt-R-Round Mini Golf & Putt Arcade, which is owned by married couple Jef Jenkins and Jane Weber.

Putt-R-Round Mini Golf & Arcade is a relatively new business that opened up this year in the city. The business officially opened at the end of July, and has been steadily gaining traction ever since.

Jenkins and Weber had been playing mini golf for a longtime, and even gotten married on a mini golf course.

They see the value and fun in mini golf, which gave them the inspiration to start their own business. Weber helps run the day-to-day operations of the business, while Jenkins helps with the creation and managing of the games.

The couple has been together for five years and only started getting into mini golf about two years ago. When asked about why they chose Ypsilanti, Jane said that both she and her husband live in Ypsilanti and love the community here.

“We kind of thought about when we go visit family in Detroit, or different cities, what it would look like if we open somewhere else. As much as that might seem appealing on some level, it was always like no, we seem really at home in Ypsilanti,” Weber said. “Everyone seems to really enjoy what we’re doing.”

They kept an eye out for space

available in Ypsi, looking places in Depot Town, W. Cross, and downtown Ypsi. They eventually found a space in downtown Ypsi on Michigan Ave.

The couple is also aware of the hardships that Michigan Ave. businesses have been experiencing over the years due to COVID-19, construction and more. Putt-R-Round has its shares of challenges, one of them being foot traffic.

“One of the things that’s been hard sometimes is the lack of foot traffic on Michigan Ave. Sometimes it doesn’t feel like a walkable downtown area, even though it is set as a walkable downtown area,” Weber said.

Even if the foot traffic isn’t the best at times, they get creative with bringing people down. One of their areas of strength is marketing. They have experience with marketing ranging from word-of-mouth to social media,

so they were able to easily apply those skills to their business and bring in people.

Jenkins helps run and manage the game within the business. His wife also helps with some of the art, and some of the ideas of the mini golf games as well. Jenkins gets inspiration for the creation of the course from his time playing mini golf with his wife, creative group for mini golf, and developing a game during the fall since they were playing putt-putt three to four times a week.

“I found these putting golf billiard balls, and they came with these really crappy, little holes you can put on your carpet and it was very unsatisfying. So I built a pool table to putt on, then I built a volcano out of cardboard and posterboard, and some turf that I had left over. Then, Jane came up with the idea to build these games, and take them to the crafts event she does for her

art,” Jenkins said.

Jenkins tries to find downtime to develop ideas of potential mini golf courses.

“Basically we come up with an idea and I just try to keep moving. Just keep going, and keep plugging away if I have some downtime. If I’m sitting down keep doing something ... keep moving towards the goal of getting things done,” Jenkins said.

They’ve been extremely grateful for the support of the local business community in Ypsilanti. They’ve partnered with a couple businesses for events and would like to give back whenever they can.

For those curious to check out the putting arcade, their hours are 4-10 p.m. on Wednesdays and Thursdays, 4 p.m.-midnight on Fridays, noon-midnight on Saturdays, noon-8 p.m. Sundays and closed Mondays and Tuesdays.

# Stan Eldridge wants to help families in Ypsilanti Township stay in their homes

*Gabriella Payeur*  
*News Reporter*

Stan Eldridge is up for re-election for Ypsilanti Township Treasurer in the upcoming Nov. 5 general election.

Eldridge has lived in Ypsilanti his entire life, is an alumnus of EMU, and served as township trustee from 2004 to 2020. In 2020, he was elected to become the township treasurer.

During the Aug. 6 primary election, he ran against Steve Agdorny and won 79% of the vote. According to Washtenaw County’s unofficial

candidate list for the general election, he is now running unopposed.

Eldridge says his main goal for this coming year is to continue to make sure we’re informative.

For the first time in township history, a one-page informational letter was sent to residents with their tax statements explaining every tax they are being charged for. This is part of Eldridge’s goal to make operations clear. This has been and continues to be one of the major focuses of his platform.

Another focus of his platform is continuing his work to make sure the

treasurer’s office as a whole is doing everything it can to keep residents in their homes.

He wants his office to be an open, welcoming place for all residents to bring suggestions and questions.

“We want to do everything we can to help residents figure out how to pay taxes, for it to be reasonable [for residents] to stay in their homes, and to bring stability to the community,” Eldridge said.

This issue matters to him because many receive their tax bill and believe the treasurer sets the tax rates.

“It’s not, it’s the township assessor, county assessor, or city assessor and we are simply bound to state law to collect those,” Eldridge said.

Being the township treasurer means serving as part of a group that moves the township in a positive direction and being fiscally responsible as to not overburden residents and businesses.

Eldridge is responsible for providing financial oversight and accountability to handle all assets and ensure the records are accurate. Every detail matters so there is no over or undercharging of residents.

“If we do it well, we find a way to do it better,” Eldridge said.

Eldridge’s favorite part of his job is being able to take as much action as he can to help fellow residents through trying times. He carries this passion with him into his job, as well as the values of honesty, integrity, transparency, and treating everyone with dignity.

He encourages all his staff members to adopt these values and give every person who comes into his office the utmost attention, compassion, and service they can.

# 'Changing the Cycle' is a resource for all students

*Olivia Hendry*  
*News Reporter*

Nearly three years into the program, Eastern Michigan University’s Changing the Cycle is continuing its commitment to bring free menstrual products to students, with more ways to get products than ever before.

EMU’s Changing the Cycle program is an initiative that seeks to end period poverty by providing access to free, organic menstrual products around campus. It began in the Fall of 2021, with three Social Work students creating the program as part of a Community Service assignment.

Now, their program manager Jesse Johns says, they’re looking forward to continuing their work throughout the school year.

“The ultimate goal is just making sure that difficulties that come with menstruation are not hindering people’s daily lives, especially not their academic life,” said Jesse Johns.

Changing the Cycle now has 80 different product supply stations throughout campus, with 30 wall dispensers and 50 baskets with products inside bathrooms. Each distribution system has products supplied by Aunt Flow, a menstrual advocacy company that specializes in providing 100% cotton pads and tampons, and wall

dispensers to schools and businesses. With these products, Changing the Cycle goes through roughly 600 products a month.

According to Johns, every building on campus, academic and residential, has at least one supply station. Some of the more busy buildings on campus, like Pray-Harrold, Mark Jefferson, and the Student Center, have multiple. And they’re still growing- four more dispensers were installed just last month.

All of these menstrual product stations are stocked by volunteers, like Chica Peters. She got involved with the program a year ago, after seeing the products around campus and using

them herself.

“I’m just one of the people that saw [that] I really benefit from a program here, and I’d love to help make it as beneficial as it can be to everybody. And now I’m making sure that products are maintained on campus. I not only help myself, but I help the entire campus by making sure we all have what we need. That’s awesome,” said Peters.

Changing the Cycle is fully reliant on student volunteers like Peters. When they first started, they would have one student volunteer monitoring 2-3 buildings at a time, making sure that their dispensers are stocked. Now, they have at least one student assigned to each building on campus.

“We’ve had a volunteer responsible for every building. We’ve had enough people interested and willing to give their time and energy to keep it restocked and keep that maintenance up,” Johns said.

The future of Changing the Cycle involves getting the University more involved. Johns has spoken to members of the University about absorbing some of the funding responsibilities into the university’s budget. This way, Changing the Cycle would have less problems securing funding.

“You see a lot of big name schools doing this, and it’s just a really nice resource to have out,” Johns said.

# The Eastern Echo's guide to local fall festivities

*Max Smith*  
*Staff Writer*

Although the first real day of fall is still a few days away, The Eastern Echo wanted to give its readers an early roundup of some of the nearby fall attractions opening up here around Eastern Michigan University before the leaves truly begin to turn orange and crisp.

**Wasem Fruit Farm**

Wasem Fruit Farm is just south of Eastern and is a family owned U-pick Orchard that’s been operating since the early 1960’s opening for the fall season on Sept. 5 operating 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Thursday through Sunday. Wasem’s has U-pick raspberries, plums, and flowers in addition to over a dozen of their U-pick apple varieties. Wasem’s also has a regular market and store if you don’t have time to go picking yourself, and make their own donuts fresh daily, with blueberry, pumpkin,

and traditional cake batter varieties available, along with, of course, their own cider. According to their website, the raspberry and plum picking season lasts until the end of September or early October, when they will then rotate to U-pick pumpkins and gourds in addition to their apple varieties.

**Wiard’s Orchard**

Wiard’s Orchard isn’t exactly like some of the other orchards on the list, as, it’s a country fair. Offering tickets online only, Wiard’s Orchard Country Fair has everything from a petting zoo to hay rides and corn mazes open Wednesday through Sunday. Tickets for weekdays start at \$18 a person, with weekends (Sat-Sun) at \$25.50 a person. These tickets get you onto the grounds at Wiards where you are free to enjoy their paid shop and variety of attractions they have to offer. Weekends and weekdays have some different events, so make sure to check the website ahead of time if you’re looking to do something in particular when you

go to purchase tickets. However, things like apple picking and the petting zoo are open every day, though the apple picking requires you to purchase one of their containers/baskets, and you cannot bring your own. Wiard’s also offers their “Night Terrors,” at nights on weekends starting Sept. 21, turning the fairgrounds into a haunted attractions park Friday through Sunday night. Tickets for that start at around \$34, but depend on what attraction and package you end up with. Wiard’s Country Fair is closed Monday, with the store (and donuts and cider) open Tuesday through Sunday.

**Coleman’s Farm**

A little further than the other places on this list, Coleman’s is about a half hour south of Eastern. They offer five doughnut batter varieties including plain, pumpkin, chocolate, blueberry, and apple in a variety of glazes. In addition to the market, Coleman’s has some cute farm animals like goats to pet and take pictures with. Pumpkin

picking and hay rides are also available throughout the season, though they do recommend calling ahead since they have generally limited hours, operating only on weekends on Saturday 10AM to 6 p.m. and Sunday noon to 4 p.m.

**Plymouth Orchards**

Plymouth Orchards and Cider Mill is a woman-owned orchard and farm business, offering fresh made donuts and organic apple cider. While they don’t offer any u-pick options at this time, Plymouth Orchards has no entry fee and a few family friendly attractions that allow visitors to go on a hay ride to the pumpkin patch or to visit the friendly farm animals. They are also famous for their fresh-baked pies and their family recipes for apple related products like applesauce. All of their produce is organic and they offer a wide variety of apples to purchase for your own use at home in addition to their pre-made goods like honey and jam. Plymouth Orchards is open daily from 9 p.m. to 6 p.m.

**DeBuck’s Family Farm**

DeBuck’s Family Farm opens for its Fall Festival on Sept. 14, and is another “fair” type of environment. DeBuck’s is home to a corn maze, pumpkin patch, giant cornhole, and of course, more cider and donuts.

A little more geared towards a family environment with younger kids, they boast a large inflatable jump pad and other play places like the pirate ship and bubble station, though on Saturday and Sunday they run a pedal car track large enough for adults.

DeBuck’s Fall Festival starts Sept. 14 and has a tiered operating schedule, beginning with just Saturdays and Sundays, then adding Fridays after two weeks, and by October they are open Thursday through Sunday through near the end of the month.

Weekday hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., with tickets costing just shy of \$17, while weekend hours are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. with tickets just shy of \$22.

# EMU takes first home win after double OT

*Jack Monk*  
*Sports Reporter*

EMU played their first home game of the season against Jax State on Saturday, September 14.

The first quarter played some excellent defense for the Eagles, as Jax State scored a touchdown, resulting in a 6-0 lead. With nine minutes left in the first quarter, Tyler Mines (34) led ten more yards. Marcus Allen (8) allowed an opportunity for a touchdown; thanks to Mines, the Eagles scored a touchdown and a field goal by Gomez (35). Defense was the word for the first quarter, as the Eagles played some great defense, as Cole Snyder (15) gained an overall eight rushing yards, and Delbert Mimms III all gained 37 rushing yards, as Snyder was throwing to try and earn as many yards as possible. With Oran Singleton (2) running to try to close the gap. With (23), Elijah Jackson-Anderson scored a touchdown, putting EMU in the lead at 13-7, followed by a field goal.

Starting the second quarter, Jax State had the ball, starting with incomplete

passes and later with a three-point field, putting Jax State at 10, but the Eagles were still leading.

With a punt return by (30) Mitchell Tomasek, EMU refused to let Jax State have a chance. A turnover allowed Jax State to receive the ball, resulting in a touchdown, putting them in the lead with 16 to 14.

Putting EMU back on offense, Snyder was making quite the plays from throwing the ball running up the field; Snyder was using teamwork to help put in some yards with (9) scoring a 40-yard touchdown, putting EMU up 21 to 17.

Snyder threw a pass to (5) Max Reese, scoring a touchdown, putting our Eagles up 27 to 17. Gomez kicked Fieldld Goal, putting EMU up 28 to 17. With six minutes in the second quarter, our defense was making sure Jax State didn't stand a chance, with a 30-yard field attempt by Jax State that gave them three points. A fumble ended the second quarter, putting EMU up 28 to 17 for halftime!

The third quarter, started with some anticipation, with the Eagles starting with the ball, Snyder's two-yard gain,

and pass attempts. A punt return allowed the Eagles to play rough on defense, putting up a 'fight' with Jax State, making sure that Jax State didn't stand a chance.

With Elijah Jackson Anderson running a 22-yard play, Mimms all gained 58 yards, and Jackson-Anderson gained 34 yards. With an interference with less than two minutes, this put EMU in for quite some nerves, with Reese (5) running in the in zone for a holding, a fourth down put more nerves, giving Gomez a chance at a 41 field goal attempt putting up three more points at 31-20 ending the third quarter.

In the fourth quarter, he started with Jax State scoring a touchdown, putting them at 26. Snyder returned to try and use teamwork; Snyder was quite the 'quarterback keeper' with Anderson on the carry for trying to 'close the gap.'

He was putting a first down thanks to Snyder passing to (3) Terry Lockett Jr a few times to make some first downs. Putting in some good plays to try and get some downs, it was competitive! A 49 field goal by Gomez had no effect, giving Jax State some chances; as Justin Jefferson sacked Jax, Jax State

attempted a field goal, putting the game into a tie, which then put the game into overtime.

The overtime attempt made teeth chatter with a close incomplete pass, and EMU gained three more points. With a last field goal attempt by Gomez, the game ended at 37 to 34.

Head Coach Chris Creighton reflected on Snyder's game plays.

"At times, he was pretty bleak. But I think Snyder is just poised; I think he threw some balls," Creighton said.

Creighton also talked about Gomez's plays.

"He's able to play! He's super talented and a great team player," Creighton said."

Max Reese talked about the game, especially with two overtimes.

"We showed a lot of fight; it was huge for us, just being able to rally off each other as a defense. I think it was huge and a big reason why we won," Reese said.

Catch EMU play their next home football game on September 21 against SFU at 7:00 PM. Watch on ESPN+ or listen on 89.1 WEMU.

## Eagle Tips and Tales: Sept. 17-23

*Elena Davis*  
*Sports Reporter*

Eagle Tips and Tales is back for another exciting week, giving you the scoop on Eastern Michigan University athletics. From cross-country races to football's home showdown, here's what to expect from Sept. 17-23.

**Women's golf**

The action starts early as the EMU women's golf team competes in the Leadership and Golf Invitational from Sept. 16-17 in University Place, Washington. This event will test the Eagles' skills against top collegiate golfers nationally.

**Soccer v. Central Michigan**

On Sept. 19, EMU women's soccer returns to Ypsilanti for a 4:30 p.m. matchup against MAC rival Central Michigan. With the home crowd behind them, the Eagles will aim to win a critical conference.

**Men's golf**

The men's golf team hits the road for the William H. Tucker Intercollegiate in Albuquerque, New Mexico, from Sept. 20-21. It's a weekend of competition as the Eagles look to make their mark against strong opponents.

**Cross country**

On Sept. 20, the men's and women's cross-country teams travel to Kalamazoo for the George Dale Invitational. Start times are yet to be announced, but it's sure to be an exciting race as the Eagles take on regional competitors.

**Volleyball on the road**

EMU volleyball faces a trio of tough matches this week, starting with Indiana State at 4:30 p.m. on Sept. 20 in Fort Wayne, Indiana. They'll be back in action on Sept. 21, taking on Saint Francis at 1:30 p.m. before a game at 7 p.m. against Purdue Fort Wayne. It's a packed weekend for the volleyball squad as they aim to rack up wins on the road.

**EMU v. Saint Francis**

Football fans, get ready! EMU football takes on Saint Francis at 2 p.m. on Sept. 21 at Rynearson Stadium. The Eagles are ready to defend their home turf, and with the home opener behind them, the team is eager to keep the momentum going. Don't forget to grab a "Water Tower Power" beer as you cheer on the Green and White.

**Soccer at Buffalo**

On Sept. 22, the women's soccer team heads to Buffalo for a 1 p.m. kickoff. Another key MAC matchup this game will be an actual test for the Eagles as they look to secure a road victory.

**Women's golf at Golfweek Challenge**

The week closes with the women's golf team competing in the GolfWeek Challenge from Sept. 23-25 in Wolcott, Colorado. This all-day event will be the perfect opportunity for the Eagles to showcase their talents in a picturesque setting.

EMU athletics has something for everyone this week, from the greens to the field. Whether you're attending a game in person or following online, show your support for the Eagles!

# Brittni Mason earns 2 silver medals at Paralympic Games

*Destiny Jenkins-Jones*  
*Sports Reporter*

Former Eastern Michigan University track and field star Brittni Mason left her second Paralympic Games with two silver medals. Mason achieved notable results when competing in the T47 100m dash and T47 200m dash on Sept. 3 and Sept. 7, respectively, at the 2024 Summer Paralympics.

In the T47 100m dash on Sept. 3, Mason finished in second place at

12.10 seconds, earning her first silver medal of the 2024 Paralympic Games.

During the T47 200m dash on Sept. 7, Mason placed fourth with a time of 26.51 seconds. Despite this placement, her performance earned her a second silver medal in the Games.

With a total of five Paralympic medals, Mason is now recognized as the most decorated Olympian or Paralympian in Eastern Michigan University's history. In 2020, she won two silver medals at the Tokyo Paralympics in the T47 100m and

200m events, and she was also awarded her first Paralympic gold medal in the 4x100m relay, making her the first to achieve this in Eastern Michigan records.

As a four-time Mid-American Conference (MAC) selection, Mason earned first-team honors four times and second-team honors once. In 2019, her 4x100m relay team won first place, setting a record at the MAC Outdoor Championships with a finish time of 45.04 seconds.

Mason also excelled beyond the

track, receiving five academic All-MAC honors during her time as an Eagle. She was also presented with the MAC Distinguished Scholar Athlete award, highlighting the best of the All-MAC and Academic All-MAC honorees from each conference sport.

The Eastern Michigan Cross Country/Track and Field team will return to action on Friday, Sept. 20, hosted by Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo, Mich., at the George Dales Invitational.

# EMU, Eastern Market Brewing Co. launch "Water Tower Power" lager

*Elena Davis*  
*Sports Editor*

Eastern Michigan University is elevating its fall sports season by launching a new custom beer, "Water Tower Power," in collaboration with Detroit's Eastern Market Brewing Co. (EMBC). This partnership celebrates EMU's rich traditions and deep connection to the Ypsilanti community. It offers fans a new way to show their pride while enjoying a crisp, clean American lager at sporting events.

Dayne Bartscht, Founder of Eastern Market Brewing Co., expressed his excitement for the project, noting that

legalizing alcohol sales at college sporting events last year opened the door for collaboration.

"When the state legalized alcohol sales in college sporting events last year, we were excited about the potential to partner with a local athletics department," Bartscht said. "Born and raised in Ann Arbor, I spent a lot of time in Ypsi, and Eastern Michigan was near the top of our list."

The fan-driven name, "Water Tower Power," emerged through a voting process organized by the Eastern Michigan Athletics Department. Bartscht admitted he had a personal favorite.

"The Eastern Michigan Athletics

Department completely ran the fan voting, but I was rooting for Water Tower Power to win. Don't tell, but I may or may not have voted more than once," he joked.

For now, fans can find "Water Tower Power" exclusively at Rynearson Stadium during EMU football games, with plans to expand distribution soon.

"Given the excitement this collaboration has generated, we are allocating the entire first batch of beer to Rynearson Stadium. However, we have more beer in the tanks and plan to expand distribution beyond the stadium later this month," Bartscht said.

In terms of community impact, Bartscht emphasized the importance

of engaging with the local community through this collaboration.

"By partnering with EMU, we can engage more directly with the Ypsi community. We're excited to continue to partner with the Athletics Department through events, educational initiatives, and supporting local causes to amplify our commitment to fostering a vibrant Ypsi community," he said.

Eastern Market Brewing Co. is open to future collaborations with EMU.

"Water Tower Power is an early pilot; if it does well, many avenues exist to expand, including new venues, new products and formats, and brand-new community initiatives," Bartscht explained.

# Men's golf earns fifth place at Southern Dunes Invitational

*Hugh Thorp*  
*Sports Reporter*

The fall season is underway for the Eastern Michigan University Golf Programs, and the EMU Men's Golf program competed in its first tournament on Monday and Tuesday at the Southern Dunes Invitational, hosted by the University of Southern California.

Ak-Chin Southern Dunes Golf Course in Maricopa, Arizona, hosted the tournament in the Phoenix area. The course is a par 72 with a total of

7,546 yards.

The event opened up Andy Walker's long-awaited Eastern Michigan head coaching debut. Walker came to Ypsilanti after three full years at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU).

The Eagles came in fifth place as a team out of the eight schools that participated. Firing a seven-under-par score of 857, they shot 290-281-286 in all three rounds of the event.

Eastern Michigan had seven of their nine members play in the match as a team. Tim Chan (Hong Kong, China) had the best score for the Eagles in

the 54 holes played in the tournament, including a 71-70-70 for a 211 total and five under par for the contest.

Eastern Michigan also had four other players shoot at or below 220, including James Baxter (London, England), Matthew Rastogi (Toronto, Ontario), Bavake Sihota (Caledon, Ontario), and Daniel Robles Deval (Albacete, Spain), who tallied scores of 213, 218, 219, and 220.

Although the Eagles came in fifth place as a team in this tournament, there was a lot of superior competition in this field. The winning score was Chris Bettencourt of Florida State, who

floated in the 60s all three rounds with a 68-67-68 to finish at 13 under par. He was the only player to have all three rounds in the 60s in the event.

Eastern Michigan's 857 for the tournament is two shots off its season-high from last season and the 13th-lowest score in the program's history.

EMU shot a 290 on the first day and was tied for last place after the first 18 holes, resulting in the fifth-place finish.

The team total of 281 in the second round was the second-best score that day overall. Only USC shot a 273 in the second round and won the tournament by seven shots at -28.



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# 'Beetlejuice Beetlejuice' is a hilarious sequel with supernatural shenanigans

Frank Remski  
Review Columnist

Thirty-six years later, an aptly titled sequel to “Beetlejuice,” “Beetlejuice Beetlejuice” was released to haunt theaters.

**Review** Picking up decades after the first film, it followed as Lydia Deetz, now a mother and popular TV medium. Throughout the movie, she dealt with the trickster demon a second time while fighting to protect her daughter, Astrid, from the dead.

The first movie was released in 1988. Michael Keaton, Winona Rider, and Catherine O’Hara reprised their roles. Tim Burton also returned to direct it. The crew were joined by new cast members including Jenna Ortega as Astrid, Willem Dafoe, Justin Theroux, and Monica Bellucci.

**Highs**

A comedy-horror film that delivered on both fronts with witty humor and gloriously gory ghosts. The movie was perfect for this Halloween season. The movie leaned into the macabre, jammed packed with dark jokes that mostly stuck the landing.

Beyond just clever dialog and visuals, the cast put on great performances. Winona Rider once again brought life to her character, now a goth adult dealing with the trauma of the first film and a complicated relationship with her daughter. Jenna Ortega was perfectly cast as Astrid, further cementing her status as a scream queen. Catherine O’Hara stole the show in regards to humor, her character continued to be wacky and enduringly self-centered. And of course, Michael Keaton still knew how to make the undead larger-than-life.



The movie mostly stayed true to the style of the original when it came to costume and set designs. Showing even more ghosts and parts of the underworld than the original, it got creative with their appearances, leaning

further into the horror elements.

**Lows**

The plot was absolute pandemonium. Far too many subplots and characters

made the movie jumbled and unfocused, making it half-baked. In particular when compared to the focus of the first movie, mainly on a ghost couple trying to exorcize the living from their house. The new film could have also done a

clever subversion of ghost tropes, but was too busy.

This also led to a pacing issue, the first act of the film having been slow to set up the characters before jumping into insanity. The film would have benefitted from keeping a slower pace throughout, allowing the story to carry more weight. In order for this to happen, subplots would have had to have been cut or condensed.

There was one special effect that did not gel with this movie or the original, the sandworm. A powerful and terrifying monster, the sandworm was created via stop-motion animation, a style that has become synonymous with Tim Burton thanks to films such as “The Corpse Bride” and “The Nightmare Before Christmas” (the latter of which was produced by Burton, but directed by Henry Selick). In “Beetlejuice Beetlejuice” the sandworm was recreated digitally, losing much of both its charm and edge.

**Verdict**

“Beetlejuice Beetlejuice” is a great watch for Halloween. Though the plot was a mess, it had a delightful blend of comedy and horror carried by a strong cast. Though of course, it did not live up to the original film, but that says more about the quality of the original than the sequel.

“Beetlejuice Beetlejuice” is currently playing in theaters.

**Rating: 7 out of 10**

*Frank Remski is a film and theater reviewer for the Eastern Echo. He is majoring in media studies and journalism and minoring in public relations. He has worked for The Echo since summer of 2023 and has written both news stories and opinion pieces.*

# 'Speak No Evil' is a family's worst nightmare

Mariam Fakhreddine  
Review Columnist

“Speak No Evil,” directed by James Watkins, was released in theaters on September 13. This film is a remake of the

**Review** 2022 original directed by Christian Tafdrup and Mad Tafdrup. This film is thrilling and full of dark humor. It features James McAvoy as Paddy and Mackenzie Davis as Louise.

A family visits Italy on vacation where they meet a British couple and become acquainted with them. This family gets invited to the couple’s estate which is in the beautiful country. They bring their daughter along with them on this adventure and what should have been a wonderful vacation quickly becomes a nightmare.

**Highs**

The highs within this movie are

surrounded by the acting of McAvoy, he played the perfect psychopath. The characteristics he showed through his character were impressive. The number of scenes where his character Paddy turned from happy to angry within seconds. Paddy possessed two different personalities: a nice happy doctor and an angry abusive father. McAvoy’s performance made the film into this intense thriller.

Another high was the suspense and how it kept building; this kept the audience intrigued. The building of a light happy family on vacation at the beginning into a distressed family trying to escape the horror. The plot twists in the film were captivating, but the real truth behind this creepy British family was shocking.

The acting of Davis as Louise is notable considering the character’s growth. She was a wife that was trying to maintain a happy family even when

she was having marriage troubles. She becomes a mother who is brave and will fight to keep her child safe regardless of if it gets her killed in the process. She played the perfect strong mother while her husband is quite the opposite.

The setting of the film was beautiful; taking place in a country estate. The house was huge and had multiple rooms that were hidden, it was like a farmhouse mansion.

In addition, the children’s acting was also impressive. Anges (Alix West Leffer) was the child who couldn’t live without her stuffed bunny. Her character growth as a child was performed beautifully. She was a scared little girl but throughout the movie, she becomes braver as she discovers the truth behind the couple Paddy and Ciara. Their child Ant (Dan Hough) could not speak because his tongue was too short. Hough showed the true emotions of pain that his character Ant

was experiencing. Not being able to speak the real truth, and being silenced took away his freedom.

**Lows**

There were minimal lows in this film, the main low was the father Ben as he was a miserable man. He would not stand up for his wife on multiple occasions. He seemed afraid of Paddy and would rather protect himself than protect his family. His wife was protecting their family way more than he was, she was stronger. And when it came to his daughter, Anges, he would always make fun of her for having a stuffed bunny. She was attached to this bunny and he was not happy about it.

One other low of Ciara (Aisling Franciosi) as a mother was her lack of capacity for remorse. She sided with Paddy every time her husband mistreated Ant, refusing to take any

action to assist the youngster. She would let her spouse control her, even when she showed signs of fear in front of the American couple. She appeared to be mentally sick in a few scenes in the movie. Rather than raising her son, she preferred to raise Louise’s daughter.

**Verdict**

“Speak No Evil” is worth the watch because of how suspenseful and intense it is. The plot is intriguing and keeps the audience attentive. This film is rated R for some strong violence, language, some sexual content, and brief drug use.

**Rating: 7.5 out of 10**

*Mariam Fakhreddine is a film and theater reviewer for The Eastern Echo. She has worked as a news and features reporter for The Echo for two years.*

# 'Uglies' is a hilariously atrocious, 2014-flavored fever dream

Frank Remski  
Review Columnist

Despite the fact that young adult dystopian novels have not been in Vogue since the fourth “Hunger Games” film released in 2015, Netflix has attempted to release its own take on the long defunct genre with the movie “Uglies” on Sept. 13, 2024.

Set in a futuristic, dystopian society where cosmetic surgery is mandatory, the film follows Tally Youngblood, A teenage girl awaiting her procedure A while learning devastating truths about her world that lead her to question everything.

Joey King starred as Tally and served as an executive producer. She previously worked with Netflix on “The Kissing Booth” films. “Uglies” was directed by McG, who is known for “Charlie’s Angels” (2000) and its

2003 sequel. “Uglies” is based on the 2005 novel of the same title by Scott Westerfeld.

**Highs**

For such an incompetent film, “Uglies” has a surprisingly sound premise. It aims to criticize unrealistic beauty standards and society’s obsession with plastic surgery. Climate change is also an essential part of the film’s world-building. This gives the film plenty of potential to squander!

**Lows**

“I didn’t say you were perfect, you still got the family freckles.” This line completely destroys the message the film aims to convey about toxic beauty standards. This line comes from a rebel character who goes against the need to get cosmetic surgery. Why is it that even among the rebels, there is criticism of arbitrary beauty standards?

For the record, freckles are beautiful. Moreover, the twist immediately after that line hammers the last nail in the theme’s coffin.

The film’s critique of both beauty standards and climate change is not only shallow, but completely undercut by later twists that confuse the issues and remove them from the real world. The movie never truly disagrees with the assertion that certain arbitrary features are ugly; it simply gives other reasons to make the Pretties antagonistic. It also never shows the consequences of climate change or suggests ways that people can fight it. Simply stating a problem exists is not the same as actually engaging with it.

It is unfortunate the film wastes these themes because that was all it had going for it. If a film cannot be thematically good, it could at least be good otherwise. Pick a struggle! The film’s plot moves at such a fast pace that it barely registers as a plot.

Furthermore, the entire cast seems to be phoning it in, leading to acting so bad the characters appear as if in an SNL skit of a bad young adult dystopian movie.

The special effects in particular are poor. Every single CGI background and element sticks out like a sore thumb, often poorly rendered and garishly designed. It would not be surprising if no physical sets were made for all scenes not set in the woods. Indeed, everything seems to have been filmed in a blank green room and hastily added in post production.

**Verdict**

Had “Uglies” been created in the heyday of its genre, it may have killed it sooner. Nevertheless, despite its genre being out of style, it would not have been impossible to make the movie work. After all, “The Hunger Games” is currently enjoying a

renaissance thanks to last year’s film and a new novel on the way. However, “The Hunger Games” is enjoying that success because it is entertaining and filled with sharp commentary, giving the story timelessness.

With how thoroughly bad it is and how out-dated young adult dystopia is, it remains a mystery as to why “Uglies” was ever made. The nonsensicalness of the movie being created leads to it being a bizarre experience, fever-dream-like in how it should not exist.

**Rating: 1.5 out of 10**

*Frank Remski is a film and theater reviewer for the Eastern Echo. He is majoring in media studies and journalism and minoring in public relations. He has worked for The Echo since summer of 2023 and has written both news stories and opinion pieces.*

Me v. other Eagles  
Julia Bartlett  
Comics Artist



Moonlight Comics: Crowds  
Funkyl0af  
Comics Artist



"\$61"  
Rylee Curley  
Design Chief



# Break the Ice

The Intermediate Gallery Group, a student-operated project, is hosting a zine show, "Break the Ice," at the EMU Student Center Gallery on the second floor of the Student Center. The exhibit opened Sept. 12. The works, student-created zines, will remain on display through Sept. 26. Zines are self-published, individually created works showcasing artwork, poetry, stories, photography, and any other creative art. Below are photographs from the opening event.

